Implementation of Abhijit Sen Panel's Recommendations

935. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 1662 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 1st August, 2002 and state:

(a) whether Government have since examined the suggestions of Sen Panel in its report on efficient food management on a long-term grain policy; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) and (b) The High Level Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. Abhijit Sen to formulate a Long Term Grain Policy has submitted its report on 31st July, 2002.

The Committee's recommendations carry wide remifications, requiring consultation with concerned Ministries/Departments and with State Governments which are in progress

Purchase of rice by FCI

936. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed by the Food Corporation of India for purchasing rice this year and the actual procurement level; and

(b) the details of the action taken to construct new godowns at all procurement points to save rotting of paddy and purchase all available stocks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) Procurement of paddy under price support scheme is totally voluntary in nature as the producers have the option to sell their produce to FCI/ State procuring agencies at MSP or in the open market as is

advantageous to them. Similarly, procurement of rice from rice millers/ dealers under a statutory levy depends on the quantum of paddy purchased by them. As such, no targets are fixed for procurement of rice.

A quantity of 83.01 lakh tonnes of rice (including paddy in terms of rice) has been procured as on 22.11.2002 in the current Kharif Marketing Season 2002-03.

(b) State Warehousing Corporations (CWC) and the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) have been requested to create additional storage capacity to the extent of 89.77 lakh MTs under the 7 year guarantee scheme in the major procuring States. This additional capacity is under creation since 2000-01.

Expenditure on buffer stocking of foodgrains

937. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that government spends more on buffer stocking of foodgrains annually than its entire plan and non-plan outlay on agriculture, rural development, irrigation and flood control; and

(b) the action proposed to improve upon the inefficient food management system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) No, Sir. The annual expenditure on buffer stocking of foodgrains is less than the entire plan and non-plan outlay on agriculture, rural development, irrigation and flood control; and

(b) Food management basically comprises procurement of foodgrains at the Minimum Support Prices fixed by the Government, maintaining adequate buffer stocks of foodgrains and distribution of foodgrains to consumers at the affordable rates under the Public Distribution System (PDS). Efforts are continuously being made to improve the efficiency of the operations under procurement, movement, storage and distribution of foodgrains.